

## LINT ROLLER HOLDER ASSEMBLY

### BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

#### I. FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates generally to a lint roller holder assembly.

#### 5 II. DESCRIPTION OF RELATED ART

Lint roller assemblies have been long used for removing detritus from clothing as well as other surfaces. These previously known lint roller assemblies typically comprise a lint roller holder on which a tubular and cylindrical lint roller is rotatably mounted.

10 These previously known lint roller holder assemblies typically comprise a tubular and cylindrical lint roller support on which the lint roller is rotatably supported. A handle portion typically extends outwardly from one end of the lint roller holder support so that the handle may be grasped by the user in order to easily roll the lint roller along the surface to be cleaned.

15 These previously known lint roller holder assemblies are typically of molded plastic construction for both low manufacturing cost as well as durability in use. Typically, the lint roller holder assembly is formed in two plastic sections wherein each section includes a semicircular roller support portion and a handle portion. The sections are snapped together in a facing relationship and, in doing so, the two  
20 sections of the handle simultaneously form the cylindrical lint roller support as well as the handle which extends axially outwardly from one end of the lint roller support.

While these previously known lint roller assemblies have proven entirely satisfactory in operation, such lint roller assemblies are necessarily somewhat bulky in construction. As such, such lint roller assemblies have not proven wholly satisfactory where a small or compact size for the lint roller assembly is desired, such as when the lint roller assembly is packed in a travel bag or on display in a retail establishment.

#### SUMMARY OF THE PRESENT INVENTION

The present invention provides a lint roller holder assembly which overcomes all of the above-mentioned disadvantages of the previously known devices.

In brief, the lint roller holder assembly comprises a lint roller support having an outer cylindrical surface. The lint roller support is dimensioned to rotatably receive and support a lint roller. Such lint rollers are typically disposable so that, after the lint roller has been depleted, it is removed from the lint roller support and replaced by a new lint roller.

The lint roller holder assembly further includes an elongated handle which is axially slidably mounted to the lint roller support between a first position and a second position. In its first position, the handle extends axially outwardly from one end of the lint roller support such that the handle may be easily grasped by the user when use of the lint roller assembly is desired. Conversely, in its second position, the handle is at least partially retracted into the interior of the lint roller support for compact storage, retail display and/or transportation.

The lint roller support preferably includes at least one flexible locking tab which engages the portion on the handle when it is in its first position. In doing so, the locking tab retains the handle in its first or extended position during the use of the lint roller assembly. When use of the lint roller assembly is no longer required, the  
5 handle is simply axially pushed into the interior of the lint roller support thus disengaging the locking tab from the handle and allowing the handle to be moved to its second or retracted position.

Preferably, the lint roller support is constructed of two semicircular and substantially identical sections which are simply snapped together to form the lint  
10 roller support. Similarly, the handle is also preferably formed in two substantially identical sections which are also snapped together in order to form the handle

#### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

A better understanding of the present invention will be had upon reference to the following detailed description, when read in conjunction with the accompanying  
15 drawing, wherein like reference characters refer to like parts throughout the several views, and in which:

FIG. 1 is an elevational view illustrating a preferred embodiment of the present invention with a lint roller attached;

FIG. 2 is a view similar to FIG. 1, but with the lint roller removed;

20 FIG. 3 is a fragmentary sectional view taken along line 3-3 in FIG. 1;

FIG. 4 is an exploded view of the preferred embodiment of the invention;

FIG. 4A is a fragmentary view of a component of the present invention;

FIG. 5 is a fragmentary longitudinal sectional view illustrating the handle in its second or retracted position; and

FIG. 6 is a fragmentary longitudinal sectional view illustrating the preferred  
5 embodiment of the present invention and with the handle in its first or extended position.

#### DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF A PREFERRED EMBODIMENT OF THE PRESENT INVENTION

With reference first to FIGS. 1 and 2, a preferred embodiment of the lint roller  
10 holder assembly 10 of the present invention is shown. The lint roller holder assembly 10 includes both a lint roller support 12 and a handle 14.

The lint roller support 12 is elongated and includes outer cylindrical surface  
16. An outwardly extending annular lip 18 is formed at one end 20 of the roller  
support 12 while a plurality of radially flexible fingers 22 are provided at the opposite  
15 end 24 of the roller support 16.

With reference to FIGS. 1 and 3, both the lip 18 and flexible fingers 22  
protrude radially outwardly from the cylindrical surface 16 on the roller support 12.  
Furthermore, the cylindrical surface 16, lip 18 and fingers 22 are all dimensioned to  
entrap a tubular and cylindrical lint roller 28 on the lint roller support 12. In doing so,  
20 the lint roller 28 is rotatably supported around the lint roller support 12.

With reference now particularly to FIG. 4, the lint roller support 12 is preferably made in two sections 40 and 42, each of which are substantially identical to the other. As such, each section 40 and 42 is substantially semicircular in shape thus having two spaced apart side edges 44 and 46. At least one pin 48 is formed adjacent one side 44 while, similarly, at least one socket 50 is formed adjacent the opposite side 46. Furthermore, these pins 48 and sockets 50 are positioned so that, with the lint roller support handles in a facing position relative to each other, the lint roller holder sections 40 and 42 may be snapped together to form the cylindrical lint roller support 12. Preferably, the lint roller support sections 40 and 42 are of a one-piece plastic construction.

With reference now particularly to FIGS. 2 and 4, with the lint roller support sections 40 and 42 secured together, a pair of axially extending slots 56 (only one shown) are formed along the lint roller support 12 so that the slots 56 are diametrically opposed from each other. Each slot 56, furthermore, extends from a position just short of the lip 18 on the lint roller support 12 and also just short of the end 24.

With reference now to FIGS. 4 and 5, the handle 12 is there shown in greater detail and comprises a pair of substantially identical sections 60 and 62 which are secured together to form the handle 14. Like the lint roller support 12, each handle section 60 and 62 includes at least one pin 64 (FIG. 5) and at least one socket 66. When the handle sections 60 and 62 are in the facing relationship as illustrated in

FIG. 5, the pins 64 register with a corresponding socket 66 which enables the handle sections 60 and 62 to be snapped together to form the handle 14. Preferably, the handle sections 60 and 62 are made of plastic.

As best shown in FIG. 4, the handle 14 includes a pair of outwardly extending guides 70 and 72 adjacent one end 74 of the handle 14. These guides 70 and 72, furthermore, are axially slidably received within the slots 56 and 58, respectively, on the lint roller support 12.

The cooperation between the guides 70 and 72 and the slots 56 and 58 on the lint roller support 12 enables the handle 14 to be axially slidably mounted to the lint roller support 12 between a first or extended position, illustrated in FIGS. 2 and 6, and a second or retracted position, illustrated in FIGS. 1 and 5. In its extended position, the handle 14 protrudes outwardly from the end 20 of the lint roller support 12 so that the handle 14 may be easily grasped and manipulated by the user when use of the lint roller assembly is desired. Conversely, in its second or retracted position (FIGS. 1 and 5), the handle 14 is at least partially contained within the interior of the lint roller support 12 for compact storage and/or transportation.

With reference now particularly to FIGS. 4 and 6, at least one, and preferably a pair of locking tabs 80 are formed on the lint roller handle 14. When the handle 14 is moved to its first or extended position (FIG. 6), the locking tabs 80 engage lock recesses 70 and 72 in the support 12 in order to releasably retain the handle 14 in its extended or first position. However, when use of the lint roller assembly is no longer

desired, the handle 14 may be easily unlocked relative to the lint roller support 12 by applying a sufficient axial force on the handle 12 relative to the lint roller support 12 to flex the locking tabs 80 inwardly and allow the handle 14 to be moved to its second or retracted position.

5           From the foregoing, it can be seen that the present invention provides a lint roller holder assembly which enables compact storage, display and/or transportation of the lint roller holder assembly when use of the lint roller assembly is not desired. Having described my invention, however, many modifications thereto will become  
10           apparent to those skilled in the art to which it pertains without deviation from the spirit of the invention as defined by the scope of the appended claims.

I claim: